Proposal to extend the irrigation under the Muneru in Nandigama taluk.

* 543 Q.—Mr. A. Kaleswara Rao : With reference to question No. 1134, dated 4th November 1927, will the hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state—

(a) in what stage the proposal to extend the irrigation under the Muneru in Nandigama taluk by constructing a reservoir at Konduru now is;

(b) whether the ryots have promised to pay any contribution towards the cost of construction; if so, how much;

(c) what net profits are estimated to be realized by Government on the scheme; and

(d) whether the Government propose to push on with the scheme rapidly?

A.—(a) A copy [a] of the latest report of the Chief Engineer for Irrigation, dated 5th October 1928, showing the present stage of the scheme is laid on the table.

(b) The attention of the hon. Member is invited to paragraph 2 of the Chief Engineer's report, dated 25th March 1927, laid on the table in answer to question No. 1134, on 4th November 1927. The Government have not received any further report in the matter.

(c) & (d) The Government are unable to say until they receive the final report of the Chief Engineer.

Restoration of Peddinayani tank in Nandigama taluk under the Tank Restoration scheme.

* 544 Q.—Mr. A. Kaleswara Rao : Will the hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state—

(a) whether under the Tank Restoration scheme for which a division has been created in Bezwada the restoration of Peddinayani tank in Nandigama taluk which was breached in the cyclone of 1925 will also be taken up; and

(b) whether the ryots have offered any contribution towards the cost of restoration and, if so, what amount?

A.—(a) The proposal to restore the tank has been negatived on the recommendation of the Chief Engineer. The Tank Restoration Scheme division will not therefore take up the work.

(b) The ryots at first stated that they would contribute towards the cost of the work; but when asked by the Executive Engineer to quote a definite figure and execute a formal agreement, they took no action in the matter.

Land Revenue

Introduction of the Land Revenue Bill.

* 545 Q.—Mr. C. Ramasomayajulu : Will the hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state whether in view of the recent statement made by Sir Muhammad Habib-ul-lah Sahib Bahadur in the Council of State regarding Land Revenue legislation what steps the Local Government are taking to expedite the passing of the Land Revenue Bill in this Council?

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a Printed as Appendix III on page 541 infra.

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A.—The question is not understood. There is no Land Revenue Bill pending in this House. The Government of India have recently addressed this Government on the subject and the reply of this Government is under preparation.

Mr. C. RAMASOMAYAJULU :—" Is it not a fact that the Government published a Land Revenue Bill in the latter part of 1926 with a view to introduce it in the Council ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS : —" They published a Bill for public criticism."

Mr. C. RAMASOMAYAJULU :—" May I know whether this Government in its reply to the Government of India is going to recommend the introduction of a Bill in this Council ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" I cannot say what the reply will be."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" May I know whether the Government will lay on the table of the House the letter of the Government of India on this subject ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" The hon. Member is well aware that it is not in our power to do that."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" May I know whether, before this Government sends its reply to the Government of India, they will give an opportunity to this Council to express its views on the nature of the Bill ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" The Bill has already been published."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" It is stated in the answer that the reply of this Government is under preparation. I am asking whether this House will be given an opportunity of expressing its opinion on the reply before it is sent to the Government of India ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" The answer given here is with reference to the question which refers to a statement of the hon. Member of the Government of India. That statement is, as far as I am aware, that the Local Governments would be addressed. I simply wish to say that this Government have been addressed."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" I wish to know whether, before the Local Government makes up its mind on this important piece of legislation, i.e., Land Revenue, they have any intention of giving an opportunity to this House to express their opinion."

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" The hon. Member assumes that this Government have been addressed on the question of legislation. I do not see that there is anything in the answer to suggest that."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" Sir, the question is : Will the hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state whether in view of the recent statement made by Sir Muhammad Habib-ul-lah Sahib Bahadur in the Council of State regarding Land Revenue legislation what steps the Local Government are taking to expedite the passing of the Land Revenue Bill in this Council? The answer given is that the Government of India have recently addressed

this Government on the subject and the reply of this Government is under preparation. I am asking what the subject is on which the Government of India have recently addressed this Government."

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" On that subject I can give no information at this stage."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" On Land Revenue legislation ? "

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" The hon. Member has refused to give any information at this stage."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" Even as to on what subject ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" On that subject I am unable to give information."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" Even as to what the matter is ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" Yes."

Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—" May I know whether the hon. Member is aware of the Revenue Settlement Bill submitted by my humble self ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" I have not got it."

Mr. D. NARAYANA RAJU :—" Apart from the preparation of the reply to the Government of India, may I know whether the Government have taken any steps to expedite the passing of a Land Revenue Bill in this Council ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" The hon. Member is well aware that the Government published a Bill and the opinions expressed on it were generally adverse. There the matter stands."

Mr. D. NARAYANA RAJU :—" Is it the intention of the Government not to introduce any Bill unless the public are in favour of the draft Bill published by the Government ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" The main objection to the Bill was that certain powers to fix the rates of assessment were not given to the Legislative Council. A provision to that effect had been put into the Bill that was submitted originally to the Government of India. As I have explained more than once in this House, they took exception to that provision and therefore this Government has no power to introduce a provision like that. It is understood from the criticisms that we have received, that the House will not be prepared to assent to any Bill unless that provision is inserted."

Mr. D. NARAYANA RAJU :—" Therefore, is it the intention of the Government not to introduce any Bill unless this House consents not to have the power of fixing rates of assessment ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" We cannot introduce such a power in the Bill."

Mr. C. RAMASOMAYAJULU :—" May I request the Government to press upon the attention of the Government of India that this House is of opinion that the power to fix the rates of assessment must be vested in the Council ? May I ask the Local Government to fight with the Government of India on the basis of the resolution passed by this Council ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" We certainly are not prepared to fight with the Government of India on any issue."

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Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO :—" May I ask the hon. Member to make a recommendation to the Government of India that this Council has expressed its desire to have such a power and that it should have such a power. I am not asking him to fight."

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" The hon. Member is well aware that such a provision was inserted in the Bill submitted by this Government and it was disallowed."

Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—" May I enquire whether the Government of India are at present inclined to give the concession which was sought for by this House ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" I cannot possibly say that. That is a question to be addressed to the Government of India."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" May I know whether in the Local Government's reply to the Government of India they propose to make any reference to the opinion of this Council that any Bill introduced in this Council must contain the provision giving the Council the power to fix the rates of assessment ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" I cannot say, Sir, what the reply would be till it is prepared and considered."

Sriman BISWANATH DAS Mahasayo :—" Sir, if the Government of India and the Local Government hold out a threat to the Council that unless the Council agrees to leave the power of fixing the rates of assessment to the Government they would not introduce a Bill in the Council, may I know how they reconcile their position with the clear and specific recommendation of the Joint Parliamentary Committee that the fixing of assessment of land revenue should thereafter be left to the vote of the Council ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" I do not agree with the hon. Member in his description of the recommendations of the Joint Parliamentary Committee."

Loans

Penal interest on loans under the Agricultural Loans Act.

*546 Q.—Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO : Will the hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether he is aware of the fact that in many cases under the Land Improvement Loans Act and the Agricultural Loans Act penal interest is charged on very small balances and that in that manner the sums grow heavy and oppressive ; and

(*b*) whether he will consider the advisability of regulating the levy for the penal rate in such a manner as not to be oppressive where the ryot is in ignorance of the actual small balance standing against his name ?

A.—(*a*) The Government have received a representation on the subject from Diwan Bahadur P. Kesava Pillai.

(*b*) The question of amending the rules relating to the levy of penalty on arrears of loans is under consideration.